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General information: (312) 353-1880 • BLSInfoChicago@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/ro5
Media contact: (312) 353-1138

COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MINNESOTA – THIRD QUARTER 2011

All seven large counties in Minnesota reported employment increases from September 2010 to September 2011, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2010 annual average employment.) Hennepin County had the largest increase, up 3.5 percent, followed by Anoka and Stearns Counties, up 2.3 percent each. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that of these seven large counties, only St. Louis County experienced an over-the-year rate of employment growth lower than the 1.6 percent national increase.

Among the seven largest counties in Minnesota, employment was highest in Hennepin County (835,500) in September 2011, followed by Ramsey County (323,400). Two other counties—Dakota and Anoka—had employment levels of more than 100,000. Collectively, Minnesota's seven large counties accounted for 64.4 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.5 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 130.5 million in September 2011.

The average weekly wage in St. Louis County rose 9.5 percent from the third quarter of 2010 to the third quarter of 2011, the largest increase among Minnesota's large counties. Hennepin County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,125, followed by the counties of Ramsey (\$1,024) and Olmsted (\$949). (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 5.3 percent over the year to \$916 in the third quarter of 2011.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 80 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000. Of these 80, only Carver County (\$928) had average weekly wages above the national average. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Three of Minnesota's large counties recorded wage growth above the national increase of 5.3 percent from the third quarter of 2010 to the third quarter of 2011. (See table 1.) As noted, St. Louis County experienced the state's largest average weekly wage increase of 9.5 percent, ranking 7th in the nation. Wage growth in Dakota (8.1 percent, 22nd) and Ramsey (6.1 percent, 75th) Counties ranked in the top quartile nationally. The remaining four large counties ranked in the bottom half nationally: Anoka (4.7 percent, 177th), Stearns (3.7 percent, 242nd), Olmstead (3.2 percent, 267th), and Hennepin (3.1 percent, 274th).

Among the 322 largest U.S. counties, 315 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Lake County, Ohio, had the largest wage gain (17.1 percent). Santa Clara, Calif., had the second largest increase (11.7 percent), followed by Oklahoma, Okla., (11.5 percent). Clay County, Mo., had the largest wage decline with a loss of 2.3 percent over the year.

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in three of Minnesota's seven large counties were above the national average of \$916 in the third quarter of 2011. As noted, Hennepin County (\$1,125) had the highest average weekly wage in the state, ranking 28th among the 322 largest U.S. counties, followed by Ramsey (\$1,024) and Olmsted (\$949) Counties which placed 52nd and 81st respectively. Stearns (\$750) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties and ranked 274th nationwide.

Nationally, average weekly wages were higher than average in 109 of the 322 largest U.S. counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,857. New York, N.Y., was second at \$1,647, followed by Arlington, Va. (\$1,550), Washington, D.C. (\$1,527), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,457).

Among the 212 large counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2011, 2 had wages below \$600. Horry, S.C. (\$561) reported the lowest wage, followed by Cameron County, Texas (\$591).

Average weekly wages in Minnesota's smaller counties

Excluding Carver County, the remaining 79 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$916. Among these smaller counties, Scott County had the highest average weekly wage at \$839 and Cass County had the lowest at \$496. (See table 2.)

When all 87 counties in Minnesota were considered, all but 4 had wages below the national average of \$916. Six reported average weekly wages under \$550, 37 had wages from \$550 to \$649, 30 reported wages from \$650 to \$749, 8 reported wages from \$750 to \$849, and 6 had wages of \$850 or more. (See chart 1.)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly data for states have been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2010 edition of this publication, which was published in November 2011, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2011 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2010* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm. The 2011 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in 2012.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Midwest Information Office in Chicago at (312) 353-1880 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.1 million employer reports covered 130.5 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the BLS Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Table 1. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and the 7 largest counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	September 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, third quarter 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	130,524.7	1.6	--	\$916	--	5.3	--
Minnesota	2,642.8	2.5	--	916	15	4.8	28
Anoka, Minn.	108.7	2.3	72	872	147	4.7	177
Dakota, Minn.	170.0	1.8	109	885	135	8.1	22
Hennepin, Minn.	835.5	3.5	21	1,125	28	3.1	274
Olmsted, Minn.	89.1	2.1	83	949	81	3.2	267
Ramsey, Minn.	323.4	2.2	77	1,024	52	6.1	75
St. Louis, Minn.	94.8	1.1	167	785	241	9.5	7
Stearns, Minn.	80.0	2.3	72	750	274	3.7	242

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(5) Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

(6) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment September 2011	Average weekly wage (3)	Area	Employment September 2011	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	130,524,677	\$916			
Minnesota	2,642,835	916	Mahnomen	1,975	\$504
Aitkin	3,860	572	Marshall	2,369	690
Anoka	108,693	872	Martin	8,768	705
Becker	13,393	594	Meecker	6,707	604
Beltrami	17,548	675	Mille Lacs	9,027	591
Benton	16,420	699	Morrison	11,584	610
Big Stone	1,955	581	Mower	16,201	757
Blue Earth	37,422	706	Murray	2,997	595
Brown	13,621	658	Nicollet	13,228	693
Carlton	12,832	721	Nobles	10,180	670
Carver	33,053	928	Norman	1,808	605
Cass	10,150	496	Olmsted	89,133	949
Chippewa	5,763	609	Otter Tail	22,184	626
Chisago	13,712	691	Pennington	9,704	703
Clay	18,190	641	Pine	8,149	543
Clearwater	2,610	612	Pipestone	4,287	552
Cook	3,074	533	Polk	11,782	632
Cottonwood	5,061	607	Pope	3,760	685
Crow Wing	28,092	628	Ramsey	323,379	1,024
Dakota	170,010	885	Red Lake	1,177	628
Dodge	5,206	691	Redwood	6,452	592
Douglas	17,499	668	Renville	5,714	628
Faribault	5,127	709	Rice	22,726	738
Fillmore	5,903	554	Rock	3,203	585
Freeborn	12,211	675	Roseau	8,375	751
Goodhue	21,692	732	St. Louis	94,820	785
Grant	1,870	591	Scott	42,643	839
Hennepin	835,468	1,125	Sherburne	23,310	759
Houston	4,889	524	Sibley	4,468	623
Hubbard	6,099	588	Stearns	79,995	750
Isanti	10,341	707	Steele	21,810	706
Itasca	16,278	704	Stevens	5,113	700
Jackson	5,263	614	Swift	3,710	656
Kanabec	3,639	625	Todd	6,195	601
Kandiyohi	22,765	641	Traverse	1,086	541
Kittson	1,440	606	Wabasha	7,091	603
Koochiching	5,217	776	Wadena	5,566	630
Lac Qui Parle	2,409	579	Waseca	7,937	666
Lake	4,615	712	Washington	73,426	755
Lake of the Woods	1,412	555	Watonwan	3,921	597
Le Sueur	7,675	654	Wilkin	2,024	635
Lincoln	1,737	568	Winona	24,151	707
Lyon	14,703	674	Wright	36,205	694
McLeod	17,278	723	Yellow Medicine	4,234	631

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Table 3. Covered (1) employment and wages by state, third quarter 2011 (2)

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	September 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2010-11	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2010-11	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	130,524.7	1.6	\$916	--	5.3	--
Alabama	1,823.2	0.5	803	33	3.7	48
Alaska	341.5	2.1	963	10	4.0	42
Arizona	2,391.6	2.1	860	21	4.9	27
Arkansas	1,151.0	0.4	715	47	4.5	36
California	14,686.3	1.5	1,051	6	6.8	3
Colorado	2,234.4	2.3	948	13	5.6	13
Connecticut	1,626.5	0.9	1,118	2	4.7	31
Delaware	406.1	0.2	949	12	5.4	19
District of Columbia	708.1	2.1	1,527	1	3.9	45
Florida	7,167.5	1.7	812	30	4.2	40
Georgia	3,799.6	1.3	867	20	5.3	20
Hawaii	593.6	1.2	836	23	4.0	42
Idaho	623.8	1.1	697	48	4.7	31
Illinois	5,629.1	1.6	958	11	4.6	35
Indiana	2,797.5	2.1	785	35	5.8	9
Iowa	1,466.9	1.6	760	42	5.6	13
Kansas	1,311.7	1.1	772	40	5.6	13
Kentucky	1,757.4	1.7	764	41	4.8	28
Louisiana	1,852.3	0.9	821	27	3.9	45
Maine	595.6	0.9	734	46	2.9	51
Maryland	2,497.6	1.1	1,023	7	5.9	8
Massachusetts	3,227.8	1.8	1,114	3	4.1	41
Michigan	3,920.5	2.4	876	18	4.4	37
Minnesota	2,642.8	2.5	916	15	4.8	28
Mississippi	1,081.3	0.1	681	51	4.4	37
Missouri	2,610.3	0.6	804	32	5.2	24
Montana	433.9	1.3	687	49	6.2	4
Nebraska	905.0	0.5	747	43	5.7	11
Nevada	1,122.0	1.3	845	22	3.8	47
New Hampshire	613.2	0.7	903	17	5.6	13
New Jersey	3,774.1	0.6	1,069	5	4.3	39
New Mexico	788.7	0.4	779	37	4.7	31
New York	8,511.6	1.7	1,099	4	4.0	42
North Carolina	3,863.6	1.3	809	31	5.3	20
North Dakota	390.8	6.7	820	28	12.9	1
Ohio	5,015.3	1.4	834	25	5.6	13
Oklahoma	1,518.5	1.8	785	35	8.3	2
Oregon	1,645.0	1.4	835	24	5.7	11
Pennsylvania	5,550.9	0.9	912	16	6.2	4
Rhode Island	456.8	0.3	871	19	5.3	20
South Carolina	1,789.9	1.4	746	44	4.8	28
South Dakota	398.9	1.3	684	50	3.6	49
Tennessee	2,631.4	2.1	819	29	5.3	20
Texas	10,480.4	2.7	931	14	6.2	4
Utah	1,192.9	2.9	779	37	5.1	25
Vermont	297.0	0.8	778	39	3.3	50
Virginia	3,602.5	1.6	974	9	4.7	31
Washington	2,905.4	1.7	1,011	8	6.1	7
West Virginia	710.8	1.6	742	45	5.8	9
Wisconsin	2,697.9	1.4	792	34	5.6	13
Wyoming	284.0	1.6	832	26	5.1	25
Puerto Rico	910.3	-0.2	506	(5)	1.2	(5)
Virgin Islands	42.7	-1.5	718	(5)	-5.2	(5)

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

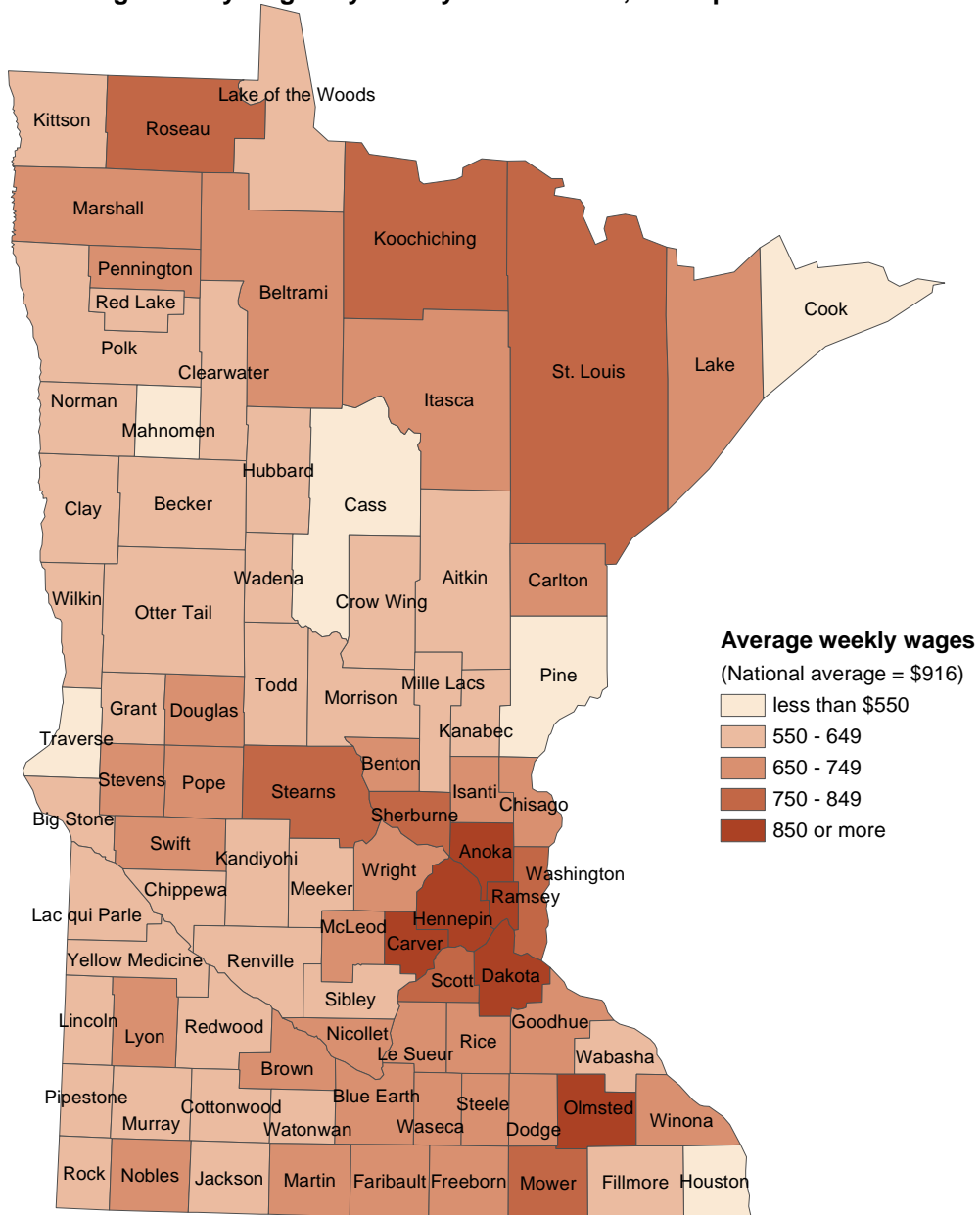
(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(5) Data not included in the national ranking.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Minnesota, third quarter 2011



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics